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Editorial

WE have been asked what we have to say about the invention of the atomic bomb. There is nothing at present that we should wish to add to what the Archbishop of Canterbury said in the course of his sermon at St Paul's on August 19. Readers of THEOLOGY may be glad to have a permanent record of his words:

Our thanksgiving is an affirmation of faith in the living God. It is also a prayer for cleansing. We have fought for the light against spiritual darkness, that we and those who come after us may walk in the light.

But in doing so, we have had to enter the darkness ourselves, to use the weapons of darkness, to turn every endeavour of mind and body to deadly and destructive ends. Physically the atomic bomb is a new thing. Morally it differs not in kind but only to a terrible degree from every other weapon of total war. The horror of its potency to destroy a million lives in a moment comes, at the war's end, as a terrible and shocking reminder that war is an unclean business, and that none can touch it, even in a righteous cause, even to defend as we have had to defend the sanctities of human life, without defilement. For six years we have been involved in it.

As we thank God for deliverance from this hateful task we pray Him to cleanse us from its defilements, to turn our hearts from the passions and cruelties of war, to restore to us again tenderness of conscience and care for all men as our fellows, to fit us with new hearts and minds, with a new grace for the works of charity, of reformation, and of peace.

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It was in October, 1845, that Newman entered, and Renan abandoned, the Church of Rome. Renan left S. Sulpice on October 6; Father Dominic arrived at Littlemore on October 8. Neither event is one that we can want to celebrate, but in retrospect much significance might be found in their coincidence. It would be difficult to say which was the greater loss—Newman to the Church of England, or Renan to the Church of Rome. From one point of view both events are symbols of the Church's failure to know the times of its visitation.

The Via Media

IT is natural enough that English Roman Catholics should celebrate the centenary commemoration of John Henry Newman's conversion. His submission to the Roman see was one of the great events of the ecclesiastical history of nineteenth-century England. For the Roman Catholic his conversion is not a problem. In one aspect it is a triumph of Divine grace, bringing a man of good will to the truth; in another, it is a case of man at long length seeing the logical consequences of his own convictions. For the Anglican there

is a problem. Why did events and arguments which left the other Tractarian leaders unaffected bring Newman to Rome? And, in particular, why did Wiseman's celebrated article, in which he compared Anglicans to the Donatists and argued that like these African heretics Anglicans were cut off from the Church of the whole world, hit Newman so hard? His mind was haunted by the phrase of St Augustine against the Donatists which Wiseman had quoted, *Securus judicat orbis terrarum.* But neither Keble nor Pusey was moved by it. It has been suggested,[1] and there is much to be said for the view, that Wiseman's article had so great an effect on him because as an Anglican he shared and was conscious that he shared very much of the Donatist temper, the attitude of mind which says, "We alone are right, outside us truth in its purity cannot be found." There are indications that very early he had come to think of the Roman communion as in some sense the real Church of the *orbis terrarum* from which he was separated. In 1833, before the Tractarian movement had begun, he and Froude had discussed with Wiseman in Rome the possibilities of union, "to find out," as Froude wrote, "whether they would take us in on any terms to which we could twist our consciences, and we found to our dismay that not one step could be gained without swallowing the Council of Trent as a whole." In the dialogue *Home Thoughts from Abroad*, written in 1836, one of the disputants who represents the argument against Anglicanism says: "I am only contending for the fact that the communion of Rome constitutes the main body of the Catholic Church and that we are split off from it and in the condition of the Donatists."[2] Newman felt that as an Anglican he was cut off from the main body of Christendom, which he identified in his mind with the Roman Church. He justified the separation by the fierceness with which he attacked what he considered as the typical Roman corruptions—communion under one kind, the Roman devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and so forth. These were the evil things which kept him in separation from "the main body of the Catholic Church," and they must be fiercely denounced. It is hard to avoid the impression in much of his Anglican writing against Rome that he feels he must be fierce. Only such real evils as demand fierce denunciation can justify his separation, and therefore he will be fierce.

There is much of this denunciation which gives one the impression of a man straining to be fierce in his *Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church*, the work in which he expounded an Anglican doctrine of the authority of the Church as a Via Media between Rome and popular Protestantism. It is little read today, but it is one of the most impressive of his writings. It is, says Prof. Cross, "perhaps the most enduring

[1] *Cf.* T. A. Lacey's *Catholicity*, pp. 134-49, an essay appended on *Securus Judicat Orbis Terrarum.*

[2] *Cf.* this passage from Tract 20: "When one surveys the grandeur of their system, a sigh arises in the thoughtful mind to think that we should be separate from them: Cum talis esses, utinam noster esses! But alas, AN UNION IS IMPOSSIBLE. Their communion is infected with heterodoxy. We are bound to flee it as a pestilence. . . . Popery must be destroyed; it cannot be reformed."

work that Newman produced . . . a magnificent apologia for what may be termed the Anglican ethos."[1] Newman attempted in this book to provide an intellectual basis for Anglican theology, to give an outline of the principles on which Anglicanism rests as a distinctive and coherent theological attitude. It was written for his own times and much of it therefore is now obsolete. He himself lost confidence in its principles before he became a Roman Catholic, and in his latter years as an Anglican defended Anglicanism on other grounds. But if, as has been suggested, the weakness of the Anglicanism which he expounded in his theory of the Via Media was rather in the Donatist temper and feeling of insecurity which accompanied it than in the essentials of the theory itself, it may well be that Anglicanism has still much to learn from it and that the *Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church* is one of those books which Anglicans would do well to ponder.

When a case of "Roman Fever" proves fatal in our time the cause will usually be found either in doubts as to the validity of Anglican orders, or in perplexity at the apparent chaos of opinions in conflict within Anglicanism, or in a demand for a more adequate and coherent intellectual basis for faith in a divine Revelation than Anglicanism appears to give. The last of these is obviously by far the most serious and profound of the three. To quote a distinguished Roman convert of our own times:

> He had confidently expected that the same school of teaching which appeared to do so much for his soul, would equally convince his reason, and at once supply him with an intellectual explanation of life, and satisfy the yearnings of a rational nature for system, logic and consistency. At the least he had supposed that he should find at Cuddesdon a body of teaching, distinct, certain, accepted and proved to the hilt, about the Rule of Faith, the nature of Authority and such matters.[2]

To a mind in this condition much of the familiar phraseology to the effect that Anglicanism appeals to Scripture, to history or sound learning and to reason, must necessarily appear unsatisfactory. If a divine Revelation has been given, if the Word of God has been uttered to man, where is that Revelation to be found, who or what is its authorized proponent, what is the basis of the act of the mind which apprehends the Revelation as a Revelation, and by whom or in accordance with what principles is the content of the Divine Word to be explicated or interpreted when its meaning is in doubt? Questions like these are often unsatisfactorily dealt with in Anglican treatises, and it is one of the services of Barthianism that it has thrust such questions upon us with even greater urgency and force. One can well understand how much of the familiar Anglican preoccupation with questions of validity in ordinations must seem trifling or antiquarian pedantry to a Barthian convinced and rightly convinced that the one thing that matters for sinful man is to hear the Word of God, upon which and upon which alone our faith should rest.

[1] *John Henry Newman*, by F. L. Cross, p. 70.
[2] *The Spiritual Letters of Dom John Chapman*, p. 21.

It is with such problems as these that Newman is concerned in *The Prophetical Office*. "We do not impugn," he quotes from Bellarmine, "nay we maintain against impugners, that the first foundation of our faith is the Word of God," and he says himself with an emphasis almost worthy of the pages of *The Presbyter*:

> Christians know no master on earth; they defer, indeed, to the judgment, obey the advice, and follow the example of good men in ten thousand ways, but they do not make their opinions part of what is emphatically called The Faith. Christ alone is the Author and Finisher of Faith in all its senses; His servants do but witness it, and their statements are then only valuable when they are testimonies, not deductions or conjectures.[1]

A Revelation has been given; by what means is it to be apprehended? And in particular, what is the part played by the Bible and by the Church respectively in our apprehension of it? Newman expounds the theory of the Via Media to answer such questions, and they are obviously among the ultimate theological questions. The term Via Media is often used in a general sense to describe Anglicanism as lying between Rome on the one hand and Geneva and the rest of Protestantism on the other, "eschewing," as a seventeenth-century preacher said, "both the meretricious gaudiness of the Church of Rome and the squalid sluttery of the fanatical conventicles." But Newman is using the term in a more precise sense to describe what he considers *the* characteristic Anglican principle that the Church Catholic is indefectible in Fundamentals:

> The received notion of the English school seems to be that the faith which the Apostles delivered has ever existed in the Church whole and entire, ever recognized as the faith, ascertainable as such, and separable (to speak generally) from the mass of opinions which have obtained a footing among Christians. It is considered definite in its outline, though its details admit of more or less perfection. . . . This is the doctrine of Fundamentals, and its peculiarity is this: that it supposes the Truth to be entirely objective and detached, not lying hid in the bosom of the Church as if one with her, clinging to her and (as it were) lost in her embrace, but as being sole and unapproachable as on the Cross or at the Resurrection with the Church close by, but in the background.[2]

The Via Media, then, is what he considers the characteristically Anglican principle of Fundamentals. The chief points of the doctrine as he expounds it are: (*a*) the Perfection of Scripture, as containing the whole faith without the need of supplementary traditions; (*b*) the need for some guide for the individual's judgment in the interpretation of Scripture and especially in determining what are the Fundamentals, or, to express it otherwise, what is the Gospel, the apostolic kerugma. This need is met by the Vincentian canon, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*—the appeal to antiquity; (*c*) the indefectibility of the Church in transmitting the Gospel or

[1] *The Prophetic Office*, third edition (published under the new title, *The Via Media*), p. 52.

[2] Essay on Palmer, *Essays Critical and Historical*, Vol. I, p. 173. This essay is a review of Palmer's *Treatise on the Church*. Palmer deliberately rejects the Via Media theory of Fundamentals.

Fundamentals. This theory is opposed to the Roman doctrine that the Fundamentals are simply whatever the Church has defined, and that the Church possesses a gift of continuous and abiding infallibility preserving it from any errors on matters of faith and morals. On Newman's Anglican theory, while the Church will ever maintain the essentials of the Faith, this gift of indefectibility is compatible with great error within the Church and even in its received teaching. He rejects the Roman doctrine because, as he argues, by making the infallibility of the existing Church the first principle of theology it in effect nullifies the appeal to antiquity which Rome makes in common with Anglicanism, and because it fails to appreciate the necessarily imperfect character of any human apprehension of the divine mysteries. It leads to the attempt to form a complete theology and answer questions to which no answer is possible, and it also conduces to a legalistic temper in spirituality, which is alien to the true ethos of the Gospel. The biblical promises to the Church are amply satisfied by this gift of indefectibility which the Anglican theory ascribes to it.

The Anglican theory is opposed on the other hand to the principle of what he calls popular Protestantism ("that generalized idea of religion, now in repute, which merges all differences of faith and principle between Protestants as minor matters"[1]—*i.e.*, what is today called Undenominationalism). The popular Protestant principle is that the Bible and the Bible alone, interpreted by the private judgment of the individual under the influence of grace, is the sole vehicle for the reception of the Divine Word. His refutation of this view consists in the statement, which even his critics will find hard to deny, that as an historical fact it leads to Latitudinarianism. While it is true that the Bible is a unity and proclaims one doctrine, the one apostolic Gospel of our redemption by God, the structure of the Bible is such that it does not force its meaning on the reader. Whatever may be granted in the abstract as to the possibility of a reader discerning the Gospel for himself from its pages, in fact, the multitude of sects and the babel of opinions that the principle of the Bible and the Bible alone has engendered forces men to the conclusion, either that the Bible needs an interpreter, or that there is no necessary belief at all, no apostolic Gospel which must be received, and that all that is necessary to qualify a man to be considered as a Christian is his acceptance of the Bible as the source of what he believes.

The primary interpreter of the Bible is the Tradition of the Church. On the theory of the Via Media the individual does not derive his faith for himself by searching the Scriptures. The Church teaches the Faith, not as her own Word but as the Divine Word. She refers the individual to the Bible, which is its inspired record, for the proof of what she teaches. That faith which she transmits is historically attested as ever having been the Faith, and outside this circle of doctrine, the Gospel *par excellence*, thus transmitted and attested, the private judgment of the individual has a varying freedom to expatiate on the various subordinate and lesser doctrines, which, however con-

[1] *Via Media*, p. xi.

nected with it, are not part of the essential Gospel. "This is the Anglo-Catholic principle; we do not profess to judge of Scripture in greater matters by itself, but by means of an external guide."[1] And this is not derogatory to Scripture, which, while it is the inspired record of Revelation, was never intended, as is evident from its structure, to teach the faith, but was written for those who had already received it, "from faith to faith." Anglicanism considers that on certain definite subjects private judgment has been superseded, but *not by the mere authoritative sentence of the Church*, but by its historical testimony delivered down from the Apostles. "To these definite subjects nothing more can be added. . . . The Catholic doctrines, therefore, of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and others similar to these, as contained in antiquity, are, we maintain, the true interpretations of the notices contained in Scripture concerning these doctrines."[2]

This appeal to antiquity is in fact an appeal to historical evidence, to the concordant testimony of the Catholic Church *considered as a witness*. It is not a mere piece of antiquarianism, but rests on the claim that in fact one can see in history the Church of the past teaching a definite faith as the faith it has received from the Apostles. "Whatever doctrine the primitive ages unanimously attest, whether by consent of Fathers, or by councils, or by the events of history, or in whatever way, whatever may be fairly and reasonably considered to be the universal belief of those ages, is to be received as coming from the Apostles."[3] Councils or Fathers, in this regard, are of authority simply in so far as they are reliable informants concerning apostolic tradition. And this apostolic tradition is in fact summed up in the Creed, the confession of a Christian's faith. To reject an article of the Creed on the grounds of one's private interpretation of the Bible is to reject the testimony of the whole Church and is an illegitimate use of private judgment. And the Church has a right to censure such an erroneous exercise of the individual's reason. "The Church enforces on her own responsibility what is an historical fact, and ascertainable as other facts; viz. the doctrine of the Apostles; and private judgment has as little exercise here as in any matters of sense or experience."[4] The Church must transmit, proclaim, and enforce its apostolic kerugma, its Gospel; but what lies outside this "circle of religious truth which the Apostles sealed with their own signature as the Gospel Faith and delivered over to the Church"[5] is in varying degrees subject to the free judgment of the individual. The absolute authority of the Church is simply to enforce the apostolic preaching.

The Church is not only bound to enforce "the Faith, the substance or great outlines of the Gospel,"[6] she is divinely guided to teach it. "Her witness of the Christian Faith is a matter of promise as well as of duty. . . . She is indefectible in it, and therefore not only has authority to enforce it but is of authority in declaring it. . . . That doctrine which is true, considered as a historical fact, *is true because she teaches it.*"[7]

[1] P. 153. [2] P. 128. [3] P. 50. [4] P. 189. [5] P. 53. [6] P. 196. [7] P. 190.

This, then, is the Via Media, that the Church ever indefectibly holds the Fundamentals. Denial of these would be the destruction of the Church, but on other and lesser matters differences can be tolerated and widely spread error is possible. It should be noted that by Fundamentals or essentials of the Gospel Newman does not mean what may be required, what may be subjectively fundamental, for this or that individual. The faith necessarily required of individuals for salvation may vary indefinitely with their opportunities and powers of spiritual perception. But

> though the clearness or keenness of vision may vary in individuals, there may be some one object, some circle of sacred truths, which they one and all must see, whether faintly or indistinctly, whether in its fulness or in outline, doctrines independent and external, which may be emphatically called the Gospel, which have been committed to the Church from the first, which she is bound to teach as saving.[1]

This complex of apostolic doctrines is what the Church will ever teach indefectibly and what she may and must impose upon anathema.

And the Fundamentals are summed up in the Creeds. This is the great crux of any such theory—namely, how and on what principle do you determine what is fundamental? Newman asserts the Creeds as Fundamentals for two reasons—that it is on these, in fact, that the divided Church is united, and that the Primitive Church considered the Baptismal creed to be the summary of the Faith and the Rule of Faith. To this essential Gospel, summed up in the Creeds, the Church has no power to make additions. It can obviously be objected that in fact the Primitive Church added to the Creed, as when the Apostolicum was expanded into the Nicenæum, and that therefore the Roman principle of development by ecclesiastical definition must be admitted. Newman replies by a distinction. The Church can explain the Faith originally committed to it by a definition, and can clear up what has proved to be an ambiguity in the wording of the Creed. It did this at Nicea, and a united Christendom could make similar explanatory definitions. The Nicene Creed is an expanded statement of the same original Faith as is stated less explicitly in the Apostolicum. But while it is possible to explain, it is not possible to add to the content of the Faith by making *de fide* doctrines which lie outside the circle of the Apostolic Gospel, and this the Anglican Newman alleged as one of the chief offences of the Roman communion.

There is an obvious rejoinder to this from the Roman side—to wit, that, if Romans add to the doctrines contained in the Creed, Anglicans do the same in the XXXIX Articles. To this Newman replies that doctrines may be either primary, and so to be enforced as of faith, or secondary, either in their nature or their evidence, and that there is much which may be taught as true and yet not required as binding. Besides the apostolic[2] tradition, in which the Church is

[1] P. 216.

[2] This can be also called, he says, the episcopal tradition of the Faith handed down from bishop to bishop.

indefectible, there is what may be called its prophetic tradition, which, not being guarded by the same divine preservation, is subject to corruption. The great theologians are the prophets or doctors of the Church, the interpreters of Revelation:

> Their teaching is a vast system not to be embodied in one code or treatise, but consisting of a certain body of truth pervading the Church like an atmosphere, irregular in its shape from its very profusion and exuberance; at times separable only in idea from Episcopal (*i.e.*, Apostolic) Tradition, yet at times melting away into legend and fable; partly written, partly unwritten, partly the interpretation, partly the supplement of Scripture, partly preserved in intellectual expressions, partly latent in the spirit and temper of Christians.[1]

The Church, then, teaches a body of doctrine which has varying degrees of obligation on our acceptance; some of it is fundamental and binding, some of it so close to this as to be indistinguishable from it and binding to a lesser degree, some possessed of nothing more than high probability as an interpretation of the Gospel, some the obvious product of given circumstances, some intermingled with partiality and error.

R. P. McDermott.

Hawarden.

Ernest Renan

Ernest Renan, born at Tréguier in Brittany in the year 1823, is one of the most outstanding and representative figures of the middle nineteenth century. Unfortunately, the very versatility of his genius, the delicacy and acrobatic agility of his mind, the pensive ever-shifting chiaroscuro of his personality, the aristocratic and elusive loftiness of his thought, are features which have estranged many of his critics and given currency to the opinion which sees in him nothing more than a brilliant and frivolous dilettante. Even today his creative originality as an historian of religion is insufficiently recognized. In this essay we shall attempt to illuminate this originality and to show how his work becomes, not merely the embodiment of some of the most vital currents of his age, but a factor of the profoundest importance in determining the movement of biblical criticism and of *religionsgeschichte* in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

We may begin by recalling the main outlines of his life. His vocation to a priestly and studious life was determined by the austerely religious and conservative education which he received at the hands of Breton priests in the college of his native town. The model of these priests was the sombre dignity, the somewhat gloomy piety of a seventeenth-century Gallican religious house. This upbringing corresponded very well to the dreamy seriousness of the Celtic side of his nature. The witty Gascon element within him (derived from his maternal grandfather) awoke into life when through his sister's influence he was called to the seminary of Saint Nicolas du Chardonnet at Paris. The object of this institution was to mould a highly cultivated and this-worldly

[1] P. 250.

class of priests, by giving them an exclusively literary and humanistic education, in conjunction with the sons of ancient aristocratic families. Renan later speaks of his transplantation to Saint Nicolas as the gravest crisis of his life, since, under the influence of that enthusiastic and progressive educator, the Abbé Dupanloup, his nature was transformed, the alert and critical spirit of the Gascon side of his character gaining a permanent ascendancy. After completing his three years' training in rhetoric here, he went to study philosophy at the seminary of Issy, a country house belonging to the important Parisian seminary of Saint Sulpice. At Issy he was initiated into the art of dialectics and underwent a severe gymnastic training in geometry and syllogistic reasoning. The basis of his studies was furnished by a Cartesian scholasticism and by the psychological metaphysic of Thomas Reid. Here his passion for study and his insatiable intellectual curiosity first became noted and drew down upon him the rebuke of M. Gottofrey, whose burning mystical faith led him to despise all human knowledge and distrust the validity of reason. "La recherche! . . . à quoi bon? Tout ce qu'il y a d'essentiel est trouvé," he exclaimed.[1] This piercing insight of an ascetic martyr-spirit was to the young Renan as a lightning-flash which revealed the inner trend of his mind and profoundly disturbed his conscience. It remained without immediate consequences, however, for the older and more experienced tutors were accustomed to intellectual doubts in their young pupils and considered that such difficulties solved themselves spontaneously in the course of time. It was therefore decided that Renan should follow the usual plan and should pass on to the seminary of Saint Sulpice for his specifically ecclesiastical training.

At Saint Sulpice the intellectual ardour of his nature found ample means of satisfaction. He threw himself with characteristic energy into the study of Semitic philology, biblical exegesis and dogmatic theology. In particular, he became enthralled by the exact, scientific philology of a remarkable orientalist teacher, M. le Hir. Under the inspiration of the latter, he assimilated with marvellous rapidity the problems of comparative grammar and entered with secret delight into the world of orientalist erudition opened up by the scholarship of Germany. He began to attend the lectures of M. Quatremère in the oriental school of the Collège de France, and it is significant that he was repelled by M. Quatremère's moderate and cautious exegesis. It is clear that it was the scientific spirit which enchanted him—the spirit of radical and disinterested research. In his case, as in that of Loisy, the dominant motive which shapes his intellectual development is the scholarly requirement that objective philological criticism should be applied fearlessly to the biblical text. During these years of passionate study he grapples in breathless excitement with the central problems of Catholic theology, applying to his mental wrestling the biblical phrase concerning Rachel: "Naphtoulé elohim niphtalti" (Gen. xxx, 8). Adopting the fundamental principles of the seventeenth-century Cartesian school, and divesting himself as

[1] *Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse* (ed. Nelson), p. 188.

far as possible of all subjective tendencies, he watches with absorbed attention, like a scientist watching the result of a practical experiment, the slow objective emergence of truth. Employing such methods in his biblical studies with all the remorseless logic of an acute French mind, it soon became luminously evident to him that the official theory of the absolute inerrancy of Holy Scripture could not be honestly maintained. His researches compelled him to envisage the Bible as a collection of literary documents which were no more exempt than other ancient literature from human errors, inadvertencies and contradictions. All the assured results of modern criticism, such as the complex structure of the Pentateuch, the existence of Deutero-Isaiah, the pseudepigraphical character of Daniel, soon became obvious to him.

These conclusions and the scientific temper in which he reached them would not have exercised a disintegrating effect upon his faith in any other *milieu* than that of Roman scholasticism. He tells us that he yearned to be able to combine a critical with a lofty religious and spiritual attitude in the manner of the German biblical theologians who so strongly influenced him. With his *penchant* for philosophical interpretation, he might indeed have made the results of his research a basis for an original philosophy of revelation. Unfortunately, the work of his narrow and conservative Sulpicien teachers had been too well done for any such liberal solution to be open to him. The ply of his mind had been irrevocably formed: he saw no middle term between scepticism and unintelligent, uncritical orthodoxy. On the one hand his initiation into German scholarship proved to him that no biblical exegesis was possible which did not make concessions to the unshakeable conclusions of philological science; on the other hand the Sulpiciens obstinately refused to make concessions and were obliged to employ all the resources of an ingenious and tortuous apologetic in order to demonstrate their dogmatic theses. Here we witness the tragic struggle of a great mind which has been intensively trained in the intransigent classical Roman orthodoxy and appreciates with complete clarity all the far-reaching philosophical implications of the scholastic conception of revelation. The Catholic position appeared to him as a finely wrought web of intensely logical demonstrative reasoning, which would inevitably be reduced to shreds once any single one of its strands was torn out. In any case the admission of biblical criticism was of crucial importance and at once dissolved the scholastic system, since scholasticism claimed that the entire complex and heterogeneous edifice of historical Catholicism rested securely upon the one true interpretation of the biblical text.

The only honest and logical solution of the conflict was the one which he courageously adopted. In 1845 he left the seminary to become, after a short stay at the Collège Stanislas, an usher *au pair* in the pension Crouzet. Here he continues his researches in Semitic philology with greater zeal than ever. His imagination from now onwards is haunted with the fixed idea of obtaining the chair of oriental languages at the University of Paris. The *brouillons*[1] which he has left, and which

[1] See *Revue de Paris*, 1er Janvier, 1937.

are now at the Bibliothèque Nationale, reveal a mind teeming with projects for future studies and ready to sacrifice everything for the consuming passion which fills his life. In 1847 his memorandum on the history of the Semitic languages obtains for him the Volney prize awarded by the Académie des Inscriptions. At the same time he wins the degree of "Agrégé de philosophie" and is offered a position as master in the lycée de Vendôme. He will not hear talk, however, of banishing himself to the provinces and thus sterilizing his future production. His one object is now to produce, to create, as the ever-accumulating mass of his notes bears witness. The creative inspiration for writing springs to birth in his mind as he makes contact with the thought of others. Whereas other students seek only to learn, Renan's mind is perpetually being stimulated by his teachers to pour itself out in creative work. The project for his doctorate thesis on Averroism is already being cherished. The Revolution of 1848 provokes him to speculate with democratic ardour about social questions, in particular about the problem of harmonizing the popular diffusion of culture with the existence of an intellectual aristocracy.

Such speculations give birth to *L'Avenir de la Science*. After the chaste seclusion and traditionalism of the seminary, where the reading of modern secular studies was forbidden, he feels himself hurled violently into the maelstrom of contemporary life with its feverish problems and restless dreams. He allows himself to become penetrated with the spirit of the age: its intellectual and spiritual ferment enters into the very fibres of his being. While the great German renaissance of historical science continues to stimulate the creative capacity of his mind, his artistic soul and his archæological interests are awakened by his journeys to Italy (1849) and to Phœnicia (1860). In 1862, despite Catholic opposition, he is elected to the chair of Hebrew at the Collège de France, and in the following year appears his somewhat sensational *Vie de Jésus*.

Now begins to gain clear expression and to assume definite shape that idea which had lain germinating in his mind for some time—the idea of tracing and explaining the evolution of the higher spiritual consciousness of mankind and of fathoming the secret of the creative epochs of human history. In an age pervaded by the scientific positivism of Comte and the evolutionism of Darwin, there was nothing fantastic about such a plan. For Renan, this vast design reduces itself to the essential task of piercing the mystery which shrouds the origins of Christianity; hence arises the series of studies (*Les Apôtres*, 1866, *Saint Paul*, 1869, *l'Antéchrist*, 1873, *Les Evangiles*, 1877, *l'Eglise Chrétienne*, 1879, *Marc Aurèle*, 1881) in which by dint of his acute psychological insight and his massive erudition he attempts to evoke from the past a realistic image of the mighty creative personalities which moulded the most world-shaking movement in the history of humanity. This colossal and comprehensive work is followed by one of equally great scholarship—his *Histoire du peuple d'Israël*—which occupied the latter part of his life and is a proof of his untiring energy. In his later years, too, he became preoccupied with problems of social amelioration and with endeavours to mitigate the hardships of his

beloved country consequent upon her defeat at the hands of Germany in 1871. His mood of disillusioned resignation (typified by Marcus Aurelius, whom he so passionately admired) was fortified by the fact that some of his favourite theories were contradicted by the events and tendencies which marked the close of his life. He had believed with intense seriousness in the science and culture of Germany and had endeavoured to utilize them as a means of rejuvenating the civilization of France. Now he saw his country writhing under the heel of brutal Germanic oppression. Under the sway of his refined, aristocratic temper, he had disbelieved in the new creation of the French Republic, and was surprised by its vigorous tenacity. Similarly, the decline of Catholicism which he had predicted showed no sign of materializing. "Ne nions rien, n'affirmons rien, espérons," seems to be his final word.

At first sight the genius of Renan appears paradoxical and puzzling. As he himself pointed out, he is a maze of contradictions like the "hircocerf" of medieval scholasticism,[1] and his thought is always in a state of becoming. His mind is at once lucid and supple, sympathetic and radical, gifted with psychological and historical intuition, capable of divining in a flash the heart of a problem, and of understanding and secretly yearning for a point of view which with his intellect he steadfastly rejects. Whatever subject he treats he dazzles us with his inexhaustible wealth of ideas, his exquisite finesse and graceful wit, his unerring psychological and historical realism, his picturesque evocation of the past, the beauty of his descriptive art, the magic quality of his style (comparable in its translucency with that of Newman)—in a word, with the shimmering vesture of poetic splendour with which his genius invests all that it touches. Yet this superb artist and poet was at the same time a scientific historian, a determinist philosopher, a *savant* in Semitic philology. It is not too much to claim for him that he is one of the principal founders of the *religionsgeschichtliche* school the methods of which have inspired the study of religion in the last half-century.

It is possible to determine with some precision the genesis of the elements which go to the make-up of his characteristic originality. The latter may be defined by saying that he combines the fruit of the romantic movement with the scientific outlook of his own age. Religion is no longer for him what it was for the eighteenth-century philosophers—viz., a didactic system of moral, intellectual and dogmatic propositions. It is a living growth which has its roots in the very depths of the human soul. It is the beautiful spontaneous flowering of the genius of primitive humanity. It gives birth to the dynamic rhythms of history. In these views, there is little doubt that Renan is continuing the romantic evolutionism of Rousseau and Herder, who understood history as a living, creative force. Herder, in particular, is Renan's master. He gladly acknowledges the debt: "Ses vastes vues m'enchantaient," he says, speaking of Herder. Just as for Herder poetry is the natural utterance of a nation's soul, so for Renan

[1] *Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse*, p. 69. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 224.

religion is the characteristic creation of some particular race. The genius of the Semitic peoples is the great matrix of the world-religions which have decisively shaped the evolution of the human species. In this creative process—the dynamism of world-history—the Christian religion occupies the central place. The life of Jesus is the most important event in the history of man since it engenders the revolution by which the most elevated sections of humanity passed from the bankruptcy of primitive polytheism to a religion based on Hebrew monotheism. Catholicism represents the fusion of the Aryan and Semitic geniuses. Not before had the romantic sense of history as a ceaseless *werden* been applied with such magnificent amplitude and understanding to the phenomena of religion.

This romanticism, however, was controlled by the scientific determinism which brings him into line with Comte and Taine in France, Spencer and Darwin in England. Whereas Chateaubriand had attempted to rehabilitate Christianity by appealing to its emotional and æsthetic values, Renan aims at explaining it scientifically by means of an objective account of its historical formation and development. He approaches the problem of its origins in the spirit of a biologist dissecting a specimen. History, he tells us, is a science, just as chemistry and geology are sciences.[1] The essential capacity of the historian is that of appreciating the distinctive characteristics and of penetrating the distinctive spirit of some particular epoch, the power of reconstructing the past with all its wealth of concrete peculiarity. Christianity is to be treated in the first instance as one amongst many religions without regard to its unique and supernatural character. Endowed with a keen historical sense, Renan is thus able to draw out such points as the rhythm of cultural growth and decay, the original contribution furnished by the religious genius of the Semitic race, the transformations which a religion undergoes in its struggle for existence and its adaptation to its environment, the results of its interaction with other religions and and other mentalities. Thus, for example, he notes that the characteristic originality of the Jews is their powerful sense of history as the sphere of divine action, he suggests the possibility of Persian influence upon the development of their apocalyptic literature, he draws attention to the wide gulf which separates the spirit of Greek metaphysical speculation from the creative spontaneity of Jesus, he illuminates the precise characteristics of the developing Roman Church in the second century. Moreover, it is not merely that he divines the animating spirit of a past epoch or the very essence of a racial genius; he aspires, too, to resuscitate the past in all its vivid local colour, with the object of showing that spiritual characteristics are inseparably connected with their physiological and materialistic basis. He emulates the scientific precision of the chemist who knows by what secret processes nature effects the transformation of coal into a diamond. He, for his part, would show how the fine flower of the spirit is firmly rooted in its geographical and ethnic origins. This is certainly the inspiring purpose of that

[1] See *Vie de Jésus* (ed. Nelson), p. 8.

rich store of archæological and topographical detail which introduces, as it were, the very breath and soul of the East into his *Vie de Jésus*. Never perhaps has the vital cultural and climactic difference between northern and southern Palestine been characterized with so sure and firm a touch, such intimate personal knowledge, such unfailing poetic charm. The perfect spirituality of Jesus is shown to be not unconnected with the gracious fertility and wide horizons of the Nazareth countryside, the fervent revolutionary idealism of the Sermon on the Mount corresponds exactly to the unsophisticated open-air life of the Galilean lake; the harsh and repellent pedantry of Jewish theologians, on the other hand, seemed to find its fitting counterpart in the arid and repugnant aspect of the south. In this respect, Renan carries into the field of biblical studies the methods and principles of his contemporary Taine.

Nevertheless Renan's realism is not so scientific as he supposed, and it is easy for us today to trace in his work the distorting influence of *a priori* philosophical assumptions. He has a naïve confidence in the validity and all-sufficiency of science, which he derives from the *zeitgeist* of his age and which amounts almost to superstition. From the threshold of an era of unparalleled scientific advance he proclaims with unbounded and rash confidence that science is to be the sovereign guide of an essentially forward-looking, progressive humanity, and that it alone furnishes the key to the problem of reality. Looking back upon his life he tells us that the scientific outlook constituted the basis of his habits of thought and decided the character of his mental development.[1] "La claire vue scientifique," however, means the materialistic determinism which at that time scientific method was supposed to involve. For Renan the acceptance of positive science precludes the possibility of miracle and special acts of creation and providence; it entails the supposition that the universe is a closed system, an inflexible sequence of cause and effect, in which no phenomenon is observable springing from a will other than that of man or the instinctive action of animals. Renan was too much a man of his time to realize how unintelligent and unscientific was such a theory, and failed to see that his obstinate disbelief in miracle was as purely relative to the intellectual climate of his own age as he supposed the healing miracles of Jesus to be relative to the demonology of first-century Palestine. This important *a priori* philosophical element naturally distorts the judgment of Renan in the interpretation of his materials, just as the New Testament criticism of Loisy is perverted by his assumptions concerning the probable and the possible.

Renan's historical studies are also informed and idealized by a subjectivist psychology. This is indeed the source of the poetic atmosphere which pervades them. They are impregnated with the soul of the author. They breathe his refined spiritual idealism, the delicacy and loftiness of his mind. The pure goodness of Jesus, the stoic tranquillity and unwearying compassion of Marcus Aurelius, are focal points for his own burning faith in humanity. His historical criticism

[1] *Souvenirs d'Enfance*, p. 183.

of the origins of Christianity becomes a vehicle for the subtle insinuation of his conceptions concerning the religion of the future. From his unpublished notes we see how the problem of mankind's future development fascinated his thought. In an ambitious plan for his life's work, we find such fragments as the following: "Religion de l'avenir. La forme religieuse reviendra-t-elle? Pas en Orient. L'Orient est mort. Y mettre toute mon âme, ma religion. Non simplement critique. Traiter ce sujet pour moi. . . . Souvenir de ma foi religieuse. D'une main frappant le passé, de l'autre élevant l'édifice de l'avenir."[1] Jesus, as conceived and presented by him, is the very embodiment of this "religion de l'avenir." He is depicted as the Founder of an enlightened spiritual humanity freed from vulgar egoistic cares: His religion of pure moral idealism, independent of temple and priests, penetrates to the very depths of the human spirit and liberates its essential nobility.

Thus the disintegrating aspect of Renan's work is concealed beneath the ardour of his spiritual outlook, his ineradicable sympathy and warm affection for the religion whose supernatural foundation he tended to undermine. In this respect it is interesting to compare him with that other rationalist critic of religion—Voltaire. Whereas the latter finds it impossible to dissociate the Christian faith from the Church which he considers the bulwark of social wrongs and which as such provokes his most virulent hate, Renan loves, admires, respects, even while his eager intellect satisfies itself in a pulverizing analysis. The exultant and irreverent hate of Voltaire blinds him to the creative significance of Christianity, but Renan has a clear appreciation of its unique importance as the fontal spring whence flows the civilization and elevation of man. It is a school for the education of the soul: it alone can satisfy the longings and aspirations of man's interior life. This sympathetic realization of the actual empirical value of Christianity as an uplifting force in the spiritual development of mankind foreshadows the pragmatism of Tyrrell and other Catholic modernists. Renan exalts the Christian ethic as an object of religious reverence and devotion. He is in fact the founder of that modern twentieth-century spirit which wishes to pluck the moral and spiritual fruits of Christianity while ignoring its roots. The interest of his position arises from his double culture—ecclesiastical and scientific: while abandoning orthodoxy with his intellect he remains faithful to it with his heart, retaining its spiritual aura as a permanent harmony in his soul. No more striking example could be found of the enduring creative influence of the institutional element in religion.

Harold Knight.

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[1] Quoted in *Revue de Paris*, 1er Janvier, 1937.

The Punishment of War Criminals: A Christian Approach

This is only an approach to the question. But the approach is important; for it will be only as the question is rightly approached that we are likely to arrive at a right judgment.

There are at least four considerations to be borne in mind:

(1) We are proud of being a "justice-loving nation"; but it needs to be recognized that, however much we may love justice and honestly try to be true and just in all our dealings, human justice can never be, even at its best and highest, completely fair and impartial. It is unnecessary to labour the point that we never do know all the circumstances and that we never can know all the motives. It is also obvious that since, in this matter, the Allied Nations will, at one and the same time, be occupying the position of being both accusers and judges, and also of being in varying degrees the injured parties, we cannot hope to be free from bias and prejudice. Again, it is very doubtful whether it is sufficiently recognized that there are varying degrees of guilt on the part of our enemies—from the Gestapo down to the relations of those who suffered in the concentration camps. And yet, if there is to be—as I believe rightly—any punishment of our enemies as a whole, we cannot help mixing up the more innocent with the more guilty, so that some will get a good deal more than they deserve and some a good deal less. And this brings us to the paradox which lies at the root of human justice. The ideal we all have at heart is, in the words of the Mikado, "to make the punishment fit the crime." But in practice we just fail. For the worse a man is the less he gets than he deserves; till we reach the depth of infamy in a Himmler or the commandant of Belsen, for whom it is impossible, from the human standpoint, to find a punishment to fit the crime. While, at the other end, the better a man is the more he gets than he deserves; until we reach, from the Christian standpoint, the height of the Son of God, in whom was no sin, but who bore the sin of the world.

(2) And yet, in spite of this inherent inability on the part of human justice to meet the case, we affirm both the right and the duty of men to judge their fellow-men. This right and duty is theirs, not only because, in the administration of justice, they are acting on behalf of "Society," but in virtue of the fact that they are men. Because men are made in the image of God, and, as such, are endowed with the capacity not only to know that there is a difference between right and wrong, but also to know that they ought to do right, and ought not to do wrong, God has delegated to them His authority to act on His behalf, and therefore the right and duty to arrive at the judgment—"This is right" and "That is wrong." But we cannot let the matter stop there; for nothing reduces morality to sheer futility more than merely to express an opinion but then to do nothing about it.

(3) And so we come to the third consideration in the Christian approach—namely, the true character and purpose of punishment. Now if we judge our fellow-men on the ground that, as men, they are capable of knowing what is right and that they ought to do it, it is

also because they are men that we punish them when they do wrong. When we say, "He deserves to be punished," we mean—which is the exact truth—that this is what is due to him, this is what he is owed, and ought to receive. Indeed, not to punish him is to fail to give him what is due to him as a man, and therefore to do him an injustice. Not to punish him is to treat him as either an imbecile and therefore not responsible for his actions, or as on a level with the beasts. This means that the essential character of punishment is primarily retributive. To inflict punishment on a man in order, primarily, to deter others is thoroughly immoral. To inflict punishment on a man in order, primarily, to reform him and make him better is doubly immoral; for, at one and the same time, we are not taking into account his wrongdoing as wrongdoing, and also are punishing him for something which as yet he has not done wrong. Let us hope that the punishment will indeed deter others, and will indeed reform him. But these are secondary intentions; for the hard fact is that punishment only begins to do a man good when he comes to accept it as that which he has deserved. On the other hand it is equally true that he is likely to accept the punishment as due retribution only when he sees a desire to do him good in the attitude of those who punish him.

(4) This leads to the crux of the whole matter—namely, that there is no contradiction between punishment and forgiveness. They are indeed complementary the one to the other; not in the sense that we are to punish and also, possibly, to forgive, but that we are to punish because we forgive. From the Christian standpoint, human forgiveness is based upon Divine forgiveness, which is not an end in itself, but the means to the restoration of right relations. It is not something which can be claimed or earned; it is a gift of God to be accepted. And it can only be accepted by those who are willing to receive it; that is, by those who realize their need of forgiveness, admit that they have done wrong, and acknowledge that they deserve to be punished and to bear the consequences. The injunction to forgive as we would be forgiven is based on two facts: first, that we are all in need of God's forgiveness; and second, that, being made in God's likeness, we are to act like Him, who does not wait till we are good enough before He is willing to forgive. It is in fact precisely because we are bidden to forgive that we are bound to punish. And it is only when forgiveness and punishment are held firmly together in the right order that we are likely to reach a right judgment in approaching the question of the trial of war criminals. There is no greater punishment that a man can bring upon himself than the punishment of Divine Love—namely, the realization, through the vision of the Crucified Saviour, of what he has done and of what he is. Our prayer will be that our enemies may be brought to accept the punishment which they ought to receive as an act of reparation for the wrongs which they have done; and, through being awakened to the sufferings which they have inflicted on their fellow-men, to desire to restore fourfold. This, no doubt, may be a long way off; but it provides us with something which we can pray for whole-heartedly and without any mental reservation. And if that which we pray for comes to pass, then it

will be seen that neither the sufferings in Him who bore the Cross, nor the sufferings of those on whom the Cross is laid today, have been in vain. We shall indeed see a modern fulfilment of the noblest prophecy of Scripture: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

R. H. Hawkins.

Nottingham.

BOOK REVIEWS

Towards the Conversion of England. Press and Publications Board of the Church Assembly. 1s.

Many of us have been to gatherings when something like the subject of this report has been discussed. This is an authentic document in that it reproduces much of the mood and manner of these meetings. There are the prophets of woe; there are the impenitently complacent; and there are those with bees in their bonnets. One wants no liturgical services. Another wants little else. As the discussion moves with increasing irrelevance it is checked by the approach of the luncheon, when the discussion is more animated. For now the young can deplore the old, the old the young; and soon we can break up and return to our parishes to administer the mixture as before.

On the credit side there are many things to be said about this report. It is full of confidence. It is attractively presented. It has succeeded in provoking immense discussion. Not least in value are the quotations from Archbishop Temple, which radiate a pithy actuality in contrast with some of the more diffuse passages of the report itself.

In the preliminary analysis of the situation it is good to have the point well made that disillusionment in the myth of human progress does not afford positive help in the work of evangelism. The blighting of the world's hopes is an opportunity not for crowing but for compassion. It has produced the true slogan of the modern mind, "It's a racket." This is to be found at the highest intellectual levels. Consider, for instance, the prospectus of a new symposium to be called *Polemic*.

"We assume," say the promoters, "that if language is finite and if existence is infinite, every verbal proposition will be limited in its truth; and also since speech is inherited from the unscientific and magical past, its whole structure must be suspected to be less than precisely accurate as a means of explaining the universe. It follows that certainty, expressed in words, may always be false and reactionary." The same prospectus lists as beyond the scope of discussion the permanent validity (it calls them "significant," which is the modern word for it) of the four "revolutionary developments":

1. The discovery of the unconscious by Freud.

2. The tendency of philosophy, as a subject, to develop into a science of verbal meaning (semantics, symbolism, logical positivism).

3. The trend in the arts away from representation towards expression and construction.

4. The evolution of Marxism as the faith of tens of millions of people in Europe and Asia.

There are many things that might be said about all these. But they *are* the essential constituents of the modern mind and they do come to the same thing as saying "It's a racket," and our report does not seem deeply aware of them.

The Renaissance mind believed that the Golden Age was in the past; the modern mind used to find it in the future. The contemporary mind looks neither backward nor forward. It has no immortal longings. It is determined to make itself as comfortable as it can beside the carcass of the dead camel, last relic of the human caravan. To be left in peace here it is prepared to make any sacrifice. This is the context in which we must estimate all the tricks, tips, and dodges for displaying our goods to the best advantage, of which the report is so full.

Should we complain if it seems to lack deep prophetic insight? That it is content generally to list the more respectable methods of propaganda and suggest how we may adapt them to our purpose? Perhaps not. But as our world trembles on the brink of not being, we question whether there is to be found here a grasp of the authentic pattern of Christian dialectic. This is a document which issues from a Church so little withdrawn or detached from the world it is attempting to influence that it lacks the power to penetrate it to a depth sufficient to influence it radically.

It may be that this is all an over-intellectualized criticism; that we are all in a measure influenced by a kind of Jansenism of thought and action in which to take any means appropriate to a situation has in it such possibilities of evil that it is better to do nothing. But when one studies the suggested advertisement reproduced opposite p. 118 of the report one is tempted to wonder whether there is not here a vulgarity, a conformity to the world, which has passed below the possible limits of Christian proclamation. *Non tali auxilio*. Are we not, in fact, as a result of the general collapse of intellectual method, confusing our categories? Rather as it is the contemporary fashion to confuse the sacrament of penance with a psychiatric consultation?

When the official propagandists failed to influence the Albigensian heretics, the grace of God raised up St Dominic. No one can say that he or his order failed to use appropriate means to defend and propagate the Faith. But it was the compelling power of personal sanctity which turned the flank of the heretical defences. It was no longer possible to say that the Catholic case was a racket. The appropriate means followed: the conquest of the universities; the missionary work to the medieval urban sprawl.

A reading of the Recommendations and Findings of this report will support the suspicion that these evangelical priorities have not been fully respected here.

G. L. Phillips.

Northolt.

CARDINAL NEWMAN. By J. Lewis May. Geoffrey Bles. 5s.

The spell cast by Newman upon the Church from which he departed does not lose its power with the passage of time. Anglican clergymen, if such there be, who use in their prayers his translation of the devotions of Bishop Andrewes will include him in the thanks which the good bishop teaches them to give, on Thursdays:

"for all who have advantaged me by writings."

The secret of his influence lies in this, that he was a religious author who was also a poet. Mr May has confined himself, in the main, to the poetic aspect of Newman's work. This short book, written in the form of a biography, is a valuable piece of literary criticism, admirably designed to introduce those who do not know him to one of our greatest prose writers and to reveal to those already familiar with his writings new beauties in Newman's work.

But is Newman the sort of writer who would care to be judged by these standards, whose work can adequately be confined to literary categories? Although Mr May disclaims any competence to assess other aspects of Newman's work, he has not quite been able to pass them by. No man could write a chapter on the *Essay on Development* and remain impartial towards its argument. Mr May takes one view; Dr Henson took another when he described the book as "Newman's bold sophistry." This sharp difference of judgment will occur wherever Newman is thoughtfully read. And it is a theological judgment, not one of literary criticism. Newman prized truth too highly to allow anyone to read his works with attention without considering whether his case is really made out or not. Mr May has tried hard to keep himself to beauty, leaving truth alone. But he has not quite managed it. Could anyone do that who wrote about Newman?

This melancholy, sensitive, and gifted man wanted the security of an infallible authority, which is offered by the Church of Rome. Perhaps other Anglicans have wanted it too, but, like Chillingworth, have not been convinced that God has provided it. It is not the fitness of the Roman claim to meet our human need, of which Newman says so much, but the validity of it which is in discussion between Anglicanism and the Church of Rome. The Church of England, in its steady refusal to offer what God cannot be shown to have provided—a shelter from the risk of faith, a relief of individual responsibility in the acceptance or refusal of divine truth—is wiser than one of its most distinguished sons. In denying the existence, on earth, of any infallible authority in matters of faith it may be described, in words which are not commonly applied to it, as the Church which knows where it is.

A. C. SCUPHOLME.

UGTHORPE.

PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY. By Susanne K. Langer. Harvard University Press. Humphrey Milford. 21s.

Mrs Langer, who is a distinguished American logician, believes, as do others of her contemporaries, that we are at the end of an epoch

in philosophy. But, unlike many others, she believes that she can detect the "new key," the transposition which its questions are undergoing so that they can once more be profitably asked. This "new key" is the study of philosophical problems in the setting of an underlying interest in the nature of symbolism. But, unlike some of her contemporaries, she does not limit significant symbolism to linguistic and mathematical forms, and the main thesis of this book contains a vigorous plea for the serious consideration of the "significance" of non-discursive types, in ritual, art, and in particular music. This last is a test case of a form of expression which is clearly not literal or representative, and yet which may be in some sense significant.

Mrs Langer holds that most genetic or naturalistic theories of human mentality fail to recognize that its distinctive function is not merely practical but "symbolific"—*i.e.*, driven by the need to form "symbolic transformations" of experience. Symbols are ways of expressing the *concept* of something: they are to be distinguished from "signs," which are substitute stimuli producing responses appropriate to the presence of their object. Mrs Langer has no difficulty in showing that a good many current accounts of the nature of language in genetic psychology flounder through failing to make this distinction. (But I suspect an exaggeration on p. 103, where we are told that "cannibals can converse over their bestial feasts in a tongue as grammatical as Greek and as fluent as French"!). She also exposes another prevalent confusion in the habit of speaking of art as "emotive," as though this meant that it comprised simply *betrayals* of emotion, and not serious attempts to achieve appropriate forms of expression. She makes this point very well, especially when writing of music, where she speaks from considerable knowledge (though I suspect that she is a performer and not a composer). Music, she maintains, does not express feelings that the composer necessarily had, still less that the performer happens to have, but it symbolizes the insight the musician has won into "the morphology of feelings," "how feelings go." I think that perhaps she overdoes the truth in this doctrine of "psychic distance" in art. The emotion expressed may indeed be "recollected in tranquillity", and not emotion in its crude state, but without experience, either direct or by imaginative sympathy, would the artist be able to move us? Nor am I quite happy about her conception of art as symbolizing "the morphology of feelings." "Structure" and "form," like "pattern," are words made fashionable by the *Gestalt* psychologists. I hope that some time Mrs Langer will give us, as she is particularly well qualified to do, a more detailed analysis of how one kind of structure—*e.g.*, that of feelings (if feelings indeed have a "structure" except by metaphor)—can be translated into the structure of a piece of music, which is composed according to the principles of harmony and counterpoint. Just how much is meant here by "similarity of logical form"?

Moreover, behind the whole discussion is the assumption that the "basic realities" which are symbolized by all these non-discursive forms are in the end the vital, physiological rhythms which underlie our lives. But is all experience, other than what can be logically and

scientifically expressed, a form of *organic* experience? The assumption needs justification. The discussion of myth and ritual would be greatly strengthened if Mrs Langer had related what she has to say to the complexity of one of the great developed forms of religion (Greek religion, in spite of her remarks on p. 166, cannot surely be ranked among these), and not only to relatively primitive forms. As it is, I do not think she has altogether made up her mind whether she holds that religion is "the articulation of basic attitudes to life," and so in *some* sense always necessary, or whether it is "a metaphorical view of life," doomed to dissolve before science and philosophy.

I have noticed one misprint and one "howler": *genius* for *genus* on p. 53, and on p. 72 we are treated (twice) to a "*universalium in re*".

DOROTHY M. EMMET.

MANCHESTER.

THE HOUSE OF THE OCTOPUS. By Charles Williams. Edinburgh House Press. 5s.

There are periods in human history when the evil corruptions of the world have gone so far and so deep that nothing less than martyrdom (perhaps of one, perhaps of millions) can remove it. Prophetic souls have always been aware of these times when they are approaching—have felt the dark shadow of those octopus tentacles drawing nearer—and there were not wanting signs of such an approach before darkness came upon Europe again in 1939. Indeed the thing invaded even our cultured amusements; and there was something doomlike and appalling in those great tragic symphonies of Beethoven that came crashing over the air from various European stations in the 1930's. Movements in art and literature, and not least in drama, bespoke the terrifying rapidity of our disintegration and not a few (particularly it may be said from the pens of Christian authors) foretold judgment. Now these works of art are taking shape in the historied pattern, and even perhaps beginning to look old; but the late Charles Williams' last work is a thing of vitality and beauty—a poetic play whose value will probably be measured by the future rather than by the past.

He tells us that it reflects no particular age in history; but can events which it records, with a fiery and austere mysticism, really be separated from the historical crises which begat them? Surely not, unless of course all such judgments from the Fall of Jerusalem to the Great and Terrible Day have and will possess a fundamental similarity.

The story is of a tiny island of the "Outer Seas" whose Christian community awaits invasion from the army of P'o-l'u—a modern militaristic state. The army comes with all the terrors and the might of modern paganism—the island is betrayed by an apostate; and Anthony, the colony's white priest, is taken. There follows a story in which terror, humility, faith and duplicity all play their parts, until the whole congregation is martyred by machine guns. It came to that in the end. For even the priest had been compromised, though his death is obviously redemptive. One survivor is left to rebuild the Church.

All the characters are symbolical and can be identified in almost any age of our history as types of virtue, wickedness or insanity. There is the "dabbler in magic" who uses Christianity for the advancement of his own ideas and is the ultimate betrayer. P'o-l'u itself is the symbol of pagan might—even masquerading as enlightenment. There is a weak woman made strong by the suffering of another; and all the while in the background there is the Octopus—the great bloodsucker of history—who has no life of its own but must be fed by the blood of others even when its own execution has been decided. The white priest Anthony is seen before the end to be both the victim and the executioner—as every martyr in history has been from the Martyr of Calvary to the martyrs of Germany and Poland and Russia; but there is a glimpse before the end of the ultimate peace which their blood has so bitterly bought.

There are difficult passages in this play, though one hesitates to say that any of them is "unnecessarily" difficult. For the author has been obliged to avoid alike the straight path of the romantic play and the classic symbolism of a piece like T. S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion* in his attempt to escape historical and geographical identification. Nor can the language of mysticism ever be easy. In fact, Charles Williams, in this last creative poem of his, has managed to be more himself than in anything else he has published; and perhaps that is why in so many respects it is his most *dynamic* achievement. It might so easily have been a weak cry in the storm which so many had prophesied and was then actually rocking the world; but its quiet strength and artistic integrity make it much more like the still small voice that we shall all hear when the whirlwind and the storm have died away. For this message is without date and is a reflection of our own age only because it touches the heart of history.

ASHLEY SAMPSON.

LONDON.

IRISH PROTESTANTISM TODAY AND TOMORROW: A DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY. By R. P. McDermott and D. A. Webb. A.P.C.K. 1s. 6d.

The well-known remark which places statisticians a little lower than the damned reflects an instinctive if unreasonable human reaction, for statistics perform the harsh and salutary function of abruptly limiting our attempts at political romanticism or social escapism. Since cultural and political tendencies in Ireland are closely associated with denominational groupings, Mr McDermott and Dr Webb have performed a useful service for all who are interested in Irish affairs by producing this study, which is a dispassionate, thorough and competent examination of Irish religious statistics. If in the last eighty years Irish Protestantism has declined only slightly relatively to the population as a whole, two important changes have occurred in the distribution of the Protestant population. In 1860 over half the membership of the Church of Ireland was in what is now known as Eire. Today over 70 per cent. is in Northern Ireland. And while

both the Church of Ireland and the Irish Presbyterian Church are declining in the rural areas, their numbers are increasing in many urban districts, particularly in Northern Ireland. These tendencies are strikingly illustrated by the fact that almost 60 per cent. of the Protestant population of Ireland live within a thirty-mile radius of Belfast, in a zone of suburbs, smaller manufacturing centres and dormitory towns, which is quite unlike any other area in Ireland. McDermott and Webb point out that the changes just referred to are bound to affect the Church of Ireland far more than they would the other major Protestant denomination, the Irish Presbyterian Church. The latter has always been concentrated in the north, and, it is fair to say, regards itself as the church of the Scottish settlement. Its hero is John Knox, not a presbyterianized St Patrick. But the Church of Ireland has always considered itself the Church of the country, and, whatever may be the basis for this idea, it has had a broadening and inspiring influence on the Church's outlook. In the future the Church of Ireland may have to reconsider its claims, or see them challenged, not as unfounded, but merely as absurd.

The fertility rates show that in the six counties, while the Church of Ireland population is bound to increase slightly, the balance between Protestant and Catholic will change in favour of the latter. This increase in the size of the minority is bound to intensify the strain under which British constitutionalism functions in Northern Ireland. In the south, if present trends continue, there will be a definite though not catastrophic fall in the numbers of the Church of Ireland. But as membership of a small, defeated and uninfluential body is unattractive, this trend is likely to be accelerated by emigration.

If a new and enlarged edition of this work is published, the authors might add a section dealing with occupational groupings within the different denominations. There is plenty of material for such a section in the Irish census reports.

R. B. McDowell.

Radley.

Called by God (What it means to be a Priest). By Raymond Raynes, C.R. Church Literature Association. 3s. 6d.

"In this book the real meaning of priesthood is set out to help those who are considering whether they ought to be ordained or not." Obviously a work of forty-eight pages on so great a subject can be but an outline and even so will contain gaps, but Fr Raynes has produced a very readable outline and focuses the reader's attention upon the really important points with great skill. It is a clear and moving exposition and gives to its readers just that understanding of the purpose of priesthood which is necessary to the making of good priests. It is exactly what is required by the prospective ordinand, and may also be of use to the clergy as a basis for meditation and self-examination in Retreat.

F. P. Harton.

Baulking.

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